

## RECORD OF DECISION MADE UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

### **PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

Any interest to declare/ or conflict and any dispensation granted N/A

#### **SERVICE DIRECTORATE: Resources**

##### **1. DECISION TAKEN**

The provision of funding of **£10,414** from the Coronavirus Community Support Fund. The funding will assist organisations to meet the needs of the local community response to the Covid-19 pandemic. This funding is divided between the following applications:

- £1,414 – to Hertfordshire Domestic Abuse Helpline as outlined in 8.1
- £5,000 – to Letchworth Centre for Healthy Living as outlined in 8.2
- £2,000 – to North Herts Multiple Sclerosis Society as outlined in 8.3
- £2,000 – to Royston & District Community Transport as outlined in 8.4

##### **2. DECISION TAKER**

Service Director: Resources, in consultation with the Executive Member – Finance and IT- Cllr Ian Albert.

##### **3. DATE DECISION TAKEN:**

**17<sup>th</sup> July 2020**

##### **4. REASON FOR DECISION**

- 4.1 The Community Support Fund seeks to support essential services which find themselves under increased pressure owing to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This funding will support three specific areas in the first instance. These are:

- Provision of food and essentials
- Mental Health support (including loneliness caused by isolation)
- Domestic Abuse support

##### **5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 5.1 There are no alternative options being proposed other than those detailed within the text of this report.

##### **6. CONSULTATION (INCLUDING THE EFFECT ON STAKEHOLDERS, PARTNERS AND THE PUBLIC)**

- 6.1 The Members of the Community Facilities Capital and District Wide Revenue Grant panel and Executive members for Community Engagement and Finance and IT were consulted via a virtual meeting held on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

6.2 Consultation with the respective officers and external bodies/groups has taken place with regards to these funding applications.

## 7. FORWARD PLAN

7.1 This decision is not a key Executive decision and has therefore not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

## 8. BACKGROUND/ RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1

<b>Applicant Project</b>	Herts Domestic Abuse Helpline (HDAH) Advertising their free, confidential Domestic Abuse helpline.
<b>Sum requested</b>	£1,414
<b>Total project cost</b>	£1,414
<b>Joint funding</b>	£1,700 from HCC Locality Budget (spent)
<b>NHDC Policy met</b>	Yes
<b>Council Priorities</b>	Yes

Herts Domestic Abuse Helpline (HDAH) provides a free, confidential helpline service for anyone affected by domestic abuse (DA). HDAH also raise awareness of domestic abuse via various advertising campaigns.

There are national concerns about increases in domestic abuse as a result of victims being locked down with abusers. Herts Police have told the charity that since lockdown began DA accounts for 20% of all crime, compared to approximately 13% before.

In 2019/20 call numbers to HDAH helpline increased from 1,875 to 2,043 – an increase of just under 9%. In terms of COVID-19 impact, call numbers have risen approximately 55% in April and May compared to the same months last year.

People can only call the helpline, if they are aware of it hence advertising the service is a top priority for the charity. HDAH are also promoting their new confidential email service which allows victims to email the charity if that is easier for them. The advertising also lets concerned family members and friends know about HDAH so they can also call should they need to.

The charity already undertakes extensive social media promotion on sites such as; Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn. They are doing as much as they can on social media and the countywide newspaper campaign is to complement that. People access information in different ways and HDAH want to ensure that as many people as possible can find their number or email address and get in touch. That includes concerned family members, friends and employers also.

The charity signposts callers to the most appropriate of up to 170 mainly Herts organisations depending on their individual situation, therefore, it acts as a 'funnel' to match the caller to the quickest and most suitable route. The charity works alongside many local organisations including; the Letchworth Heritage Foundation, the Stevenage and North Herts Domestic Abuse Forum, SADA and Safer Places.

The Panel unanimously voted to recommend the amount of £1,414 as requested.

8.2

<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Letchworth Centre for Healthy Living</b>
<b>Project</b>	Counselling Sessions
<b>Sum requested</b>	£5,000
<b>Total project cost</b>	£5,880
<b>Joint funding</b>	£880 – The clients pay £5 per session any shortfall is covered by the Letchworth Centre
<b>NHDC Policy met</b>	Yes
<b>Council Priorities</b>	Build thriving and resilient communities / respond to challenges to the environment

The Letchworth Centre for Healthy Living provides; wellbeing classes for all ages; a counselling service (including low-cost provision); a complementary therapy clinic; a service addressing children and young people's (and teachers') mental health and wellbeing which delivers Mindfulness programmes to schools; a wellbeing programme aimed at older people with mobility problems or who are living with long-term conditions.

They are requesting a grant to fund the delivery of a total of 168 counselling sessions to 28 individuals whose mental health has been adversely affected by the COVID crisis. Each person would be able to access up to six sessions provided by qualified and experienced counsellors who are all accredited by the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP).

The actual cost of each session is £35

£28.80 is the fee paid to the counsellor

£4.80 is the cost (£28.80 divided over the 6 sessions) of the initial assessment session which each client will have to have

£1.40 is a contribution to the cost of administering/managing this service

Each client contributes £5 per session.

The beneficiaries would be restricted to those residents in North Hertfordshire and are expected to come from across the North Hertfordshire District. The aim would be for 50% of those accessing the service to be young persons under the age of 18.

There has been a 50% increase in enquiries for the counselling service since the beginning of the pandemic, with most people presenting with stress, anxiety and depression, many are struggling financially.

The service would be publicised via Herts Help and Healthy Hub North Herts, and to the following groups (of which they are a member) North Herts Health & Wellbeing Partnership, Integrated Care Delivery Board. They will also use social media channels and approach schools and FE colleges.

The Panel agreed unanimously to recommend £5,000 the full amount of funding requested.

## 8.3

<b>Applicant Project</b>	<b>North Herts MS Society</b> Support with costs for running on-line neurophysiology sessions
<b>Sum requested</b>	£2,000
<b>Total project cost</b>	£3,000
<b>Joint funding</b>	£1,000 from own Funds
<b>NHDC Policy met</b>	Yes
<b>Council Priorities</b>	Build thriving and resilient communities.

North Herts MS Society runs support sessions for people with MS. Since the start of the Covid-19 Pandemic these sessions have been operating on-line and have proved beneficial especially for people's mental wellbeing. The current programme costs £200 per week to run and this includes four, one-hour sessions which are run on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. The sessions are all chair based and include Neurophysiology and Pilates sessions. The group does not receive funding for these sessions and as they have not been able to carry out street collections since March, they are seeking funding support via the Coronavirus Community Support Fund.

North Herts MS Society is a registered charity which has been in operation since 1958. The organisation is based in Letchworth but reaches out to those with MS throughout the North Herts district.

Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, the organisation has needed to shift from face to face meetings to online zoom session. These sessions have been crucial for the mental wellbeing of their clients.

The organisation is usually very successful in gaining funds for their projects via on street collections, but these have not been possible since the start of Covid-19.

The sessions have been well received by those suffering from MS and the organisation would like to continue these during the rest of 2020. The organisation has £1,000 match funding in place which will allow for sessions to continue for July and some of August. The £2,000 requested from the C-19 Community Support Fund, along with other funding will allow the sessions to run through to December 2020.

The Panel unanimously agreed to recommend the £2,000 amount of funding as requested.

## 8.4

<b>Applicant Project</b>	<b>Royston &amp; District Community Transport</b> Support with costs for sanitising of vehicles and PPE for volunteers delivering food and essentials
<b>Sum requested</b>	£2,000
<b>Total project cost</b>	£16,580
<b>Joint funding</b>	£14,000 (Existing grants & 300 Club Income)
<b>NHDC Policy met</b>	Yes
<b>Council Priorities</b>	Build thriving and resilient communities.

Royston & District Community Transport is an Independent registered charity, offering door to door transport for people living in Royston and surrounding villages of North &

East Hertfordshire and South Cambridgeshire who, for reasons of frailty or disability, are unable to use public transport and do not have the use of a car. For those with limited mobility we operate wheelchair accessible vehicles for individuals and groups. During Covid-19 Royston Community Transport has been heavily involved in delivering food and other essentials to vulnerable residents. They have been doing this as well as continuing the essential travel to hospitals for vulnerable residents. The group is seeking funding support to cover the costs for essential sanitising of vehicles, the purchase of protection screens for vehicles and PPE for all volunteers. The provision of food and essentials is an extra activity for the organisation but an essential service since the start of the Pandemic.

The overall cost for the service over the next 6 months is £16,580 and the £2,000 requested is solely for sanitising of vehicles used for delivering food and essentials to residents and the necessary PPE to keep all parties safe.

Royston & District Community Transport is a registered charity which has been operating out of Royston Hospital since 1994.

The Panel unanimously agreed to recommend the £2,000 amount of funding as requested.

## 9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. Following an urgent delegated decision by the Chief Executive on 3 April 2020<sup>1</sup> the uses of the Reserve have been extended to include “support the response to and reduce the impact of major incidents”. This allows it to be used for discretionary spend in response to Covid-19. The referenced delegated decision also “***noted that any discretionary spend in respect of Covid-19 will be approved by the Service Director: Resources as Budget Manager, in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance and IT***”.

## 10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The total of funding recommended by this meeting of the Panel is £10,414, taking the total amount that has been recommended up to £69,468.

## 11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are no relevant risk entries that have been recorded on Pentana Risk, the Council’s performance and risk system. Individual events should have their own risk assessments in place to mitigate any health and safety issues. Whenever a request for grant funding for equipment is received, the recipient of the funding will be advised to obtain insurance for the item to avoid a repeat request for funding in the event of the equipment being stolen or damaged. There are no pertinent risk implications for the Authority associated with any items within this report.

## 12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 12.2 All projects that are assigned area committee funding are assessed to ensure that they do not negatively impact on any part of the local community. The only deviation to this

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/sites/northherts-cms/files/y%20Item%201b%20-%20Third%20Quarter%20Revenue%20Monitoring%202019-20.pdf>

is where a minority or marginalised group may specifically receive funding or allocation of resources to address a particular area of need or 'gap' in provision.

**13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS**

13.1 The Social Value Act and "go local" policy do not apply to this decision.

**14. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

14.1 There are no pertinent Human Resource implications associated with any items within this report.

**15. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

15.1 There are no pertinent Environmental Implications associated with any items within this report

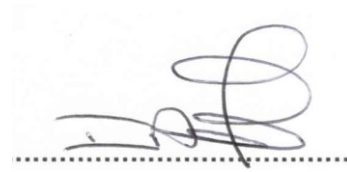
**16. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Officers have received and approved the grant application, mission statement and accounts. Covid 19 Special Reserve Fund 2020 (Community Grants) Protocol.

**NOTIFICATION DATE**

24 July 2020

Signature of Executive Member Consulted .....



Date ...17 July 2020.....

Signature of Decision Taker .....



**Call-in does not apply to NON-EXECUTIVE DECISIONS**